

St. John the Evangelist
Episcopal Church
South side of State Rte. 739,
.2 miles east of U.S. Rte. 209
Dingmans Ferry, Delaware Township
Pike County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1254

HABS
PA,
52-DING,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Location: South side of State Rte. 739, .2 miles east of U.S. Rte 209, in Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Dingmans Ferry, Delaware Township, Pike County, Pennsylvania.

USGS Culvers Gap Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.511100.4563110.

Present Owner: United States Government.

Present Use: Church.

Significance: This is a good example of the "Carpenter Gothic" wood Church. The Church still retains much of its original detail including celtic crosses, stained glass windows and open belfrey.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1887. The cornerstone was laid on May 26. The Church was consecrated on September 7.
2. Original and subsequent owners:

The following is an incomplete chain of title. The records are found in the Pike County Recorder's Office, Milford, Pa.

1887 Date 3 May 1887 Recorded 4 June 1887
Deed Book No. 43 p. 405
John W. Kilsby and Mary Kilsby, his wife,
to
Rupert P. Niles (To Niles in trust for conveying to the
"Corporation of the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist
whenever said corporation is formed.")

1891 Date 13 July 1891 Recorded 27 July 1891
Deed Book No. 47 p. 475
Rupert P. Niles
to
Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of the Church of St.
John the Evangelist of Dingman's Ferry.

3. Builder, contractor, supplier: Built by Klein Tittman and David Gunn, and assisted by others. The wood for the Church came from the local saw mills of the Adams and Angle families. The Angle Mill operated a vertical saw, 1815 to about about 1890.

ST. JOHN
THE EVANGELIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HABS No. PA-1254 (Page 2)

4. Original plan and construction: The raised gable roof at the end of the liturgical north sacristy was built to accommodate the large pipes of the original organ. This organ was removed and sold to the Dutch Reform Church in Montague, New Jersey, and a pedal pump organ replaced it. Mr. and Mrs. Angle bought this organ around 1960 and still possess it.
5. Alterations and additions: The Church was heavily altered in about 1960. The alcove for the organist was built at the juncture of the nave and the liturgical north sacristy to accommodate the new electric organ. In addition, the arches connecting the chancel to the two flanking sacristies were walled in, the small plywood geodesic dome was connected to the "east" end of the church for use as a Sunday School and meeting room, obsolete electric fixtures and wiring in the nave were replaced, a new heating system was installed, and a lavatory was added in the corner of the "north" sacristy. The storm windows were put on in about 1965.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The church parish was originally organized to serve summer guests and full-time residents in Dingman's Ferry. Services were held from June through August at the High Falls Hotel. Later, when a church building was needed, and funds were subscribed, John Wykes Kilsby, an English resident, donated the land. The building was originally used only during the summers. In October 1956, the church vestry was reorganized and in June the following year the church building began to serve on a year-round basis. It is believed that a well-known New York architect designed the building, but his name is not known. ("St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church...").

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: photocopies of the church in 1896 show front elevation and an interior photo of the altar. (Henn, William F., The Story of the River Road, 1975. p. 102).

2. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Angle, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond D., Dingman's Ferry, Pa., Interview, 7 July 1970. Mr. Angle is Senior Warden of the Vestry.

Charter of Incorporation dated 29 May 1891. Carbon copy in possession of Mr. Angle.

ST. JOHN
THE EVANGELIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HABS No. PA-1254 (Page 3)

Church records. Xerox copy in possession of the senior warden. Raymond D. Angle, Dingman's Ferry, Pa.

"Notice of Consecration," 7 Sept. 1887, framed and hanging in the nave of the church.

b. Secondary and published sources:

Henn, William F., The Story of the River Road, 1975.

"St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, Dingman's Ferry, Pa. 70th Anniversary, September 7, 1957." A pamphlet prepared by a committee - Robert M. Findlay, Kennard Lewis and Robert K. Dorner.

Prepared by Wesley Shank
Project Historian
Historic American
Buildings Survey
June 16, 1970

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: A good example of the "Carpenter Gothic" wood church as constructed in the late nineteenth century. Except for an added wing and space for organ, there appears to be little modification of the original structure as erected in 1887.
2. Condition of fabric: Good, well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 36'-10" x 50'-2".
2. Foundations: Rubble slate perimeter wall with concrete block under the organ room addition. The cornerstone of smooth dark gray slate, is incised with "St. Johns Chapel 1887". The building does not have a cellar.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Wood stud framing, 2" x 6"; exterior sheathing and 1½" vertical siding with molded battens. Interior is plastered. Simple scissor trusses span the nave and the chancel.

ST. JOHN
THE EVANGELIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HABS No. PA-1254 (Page 4)

4. Exterior steps, stoops: The front walk and exterior stair treads, front and rear, are of dark gray slate. Wing walls are of rounded river stones topped with flat slabs of slate. Rear stoop, steps and shed roof were added recently.
5. Chimneys: Since the church was for summer use only, a heating system was not in the original building. Added later, stoves exist in the northeast and northwest corners of the nave. The flues are exterior brick chimneys located on either side of the nave near the front.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: North (front) doorway is a lancet form with a pair of doors opening inward. Doors have panels of 4" boards in diagonal pattern. The rear sacristy door is a conventional flush pattern type, lancet in shape.
 - b. Windows: Except for rectangular windows in the organ alcove, all windows are lancet form. Lower sash is pivoted, but no longer operable with added fixed storm sash. The typical window has leaded diamond panes. One window on west side has a robed female figure, "in memoriam Ella Bennitt Fulmer March 27 AD 1904". The south window of chancel has eagle "St. John IHC".
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The steep gable over the entry, the nave, and the wings is supported by major scissor trusses; exposed in the nave and chancel.

The gable on the extended east wing has a higher roof. The roofs are covered with mineral-surfaced composition shingles.
 - b. Eaves: Eaves project 1'-4", with vertical fascia and boxed on underside of rafters.
8. Tower: On the ridge near the front of the church there is a small, open type bell tower with "X" pattern bracing. It is topped with a slender spire, shingle covered.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The church contains an entry vestibule, the nave 21'-0" x 31'-6", chancel 12'-0" x 13'-0"; sacristy and robing room. Recently added: a Sunday School lounge and a polygonal dome of triangular faceted plywood sheets.

ST. JOHN
THE EVANGELIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HABS No. PA-1254 (Page 5)

2. Flooring: The entrance vestibule is wood flooring covered with linoleum. The nave flooring is 3" tongue-and-groove wood with the aisle, chancel and sacristy covered with carpeting.
3. Walls: Wood pilasters divide the nave into four bays. Wainscot, composed of 5" vertical beaded boarding, extends four feet off the floor. Above the wainscot, the walls are plaster.
4. Ceilings: The steep-pitched roof is supported by scissor type trusses, exposed on the interior. The underside of the roof is finished with 3" tongue-and-groove boarding. All interior woodwork is natural finish and varnished.
5. Doors: The doors to the sacristy and robing room were recently added and are constructed of plywood. The pair of doors from the entrance vestibule to the nave are covered with canvas on the nave side.
6. Trim: The window and door trim is plain, 3" wide and shaped to fit the Lancet arch openings. Natural finish and varnished. On each of the pilasters there is sawn shaped pendant at the base of the vertical truss support member.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The church faces north-northeast. It is located on an interesting site on a hillside terrace above the street with a background of lofty trees.
2. Outbuildings: To the rear and connecting with the church there is a recently added Sunday school lounge housed in a modern-type polygonal dome built of triangular sheets of plywood.
3. Landscaping, walls, walks: The driveway and rear parking space are surfaced with crushed stone. Walks near the church entrance are paved with large slabs of slate. Dry stone walls are built to retain the slopes along the driveway, the street and on the east side of the church structure.

Prepared by Melvin M. Rotsch
Project Supervisor
Historic American
Buildings Survey
June, 1970

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, supervised by the National Park Service and funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The project, which extended from 1967 to 1971, was under the general direction of James C. Massey, Chief of HABS. This structure was measured and drawn in the summer of 1970 under the direction of Melvin M. Rotsch (Texas A & M University), Project Supervisor, by student assistant architects John Albers (University of Florida) and Gary Kreger (University of Virginia) in the HABS field office at Millbrook, New Jersey in the project area of the Tocks Island Reservoir and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. The historical data was written by, project historian, Wesley Shank, in 1970. The written data was edited for transmittal to the Library of Congress in the summer of 1980 by Kent R. Newell of the HABS staff. The photographs were taken by George Eisenman in 1970.